

William S. (Bill) Samuel

701 King Farm Blvd., Apt. 134, Rockville, MD 20850-6168
240-477-8827 (home), 301-943-6406 (cell), 240-801-6245 (Google Voice)

E-mail: billsamuel3@gmail.com
Fax to E-mail: 413-485-2881

Testimony on Congressional Redistricting Map Proposed by the Citizens Redistricting Commission


Hello. I am William (Bill) Samuel, a resident of Rockville, Maryland. I am a longtime Maryland voter and a registered Democrat. I have had a longtime concern for fair, democratic election processes. One of these processes is the drawing of districts.

The criteria for fair legislative districting should be that districts are compact and contiguous, jurisdictions should not be divided more than is needed to make for nearly equal populations, that there should be no partisan considerations in the drawing of districts, and there should be no favoritism towards or against any particular politicians. The map proposed by the Citizens Redistricting Commission (CRC) meets all of these criteria, and therefore should be approved.

The history is that Maryland has had some of the worst gerrymandering in the country. The Citizens Redistricting Commission, composed of three Democrats, three Republicans, and three independents, therefore decided not to use the current map as a starting point. Instead, they started fresh to create a map of compact and contiguous districts that kept jurisdictions together in a district to the extend feasible, and to totally ignore political considerations. Their map reflects those considerations.

The Princeton Gerrymandering Project, a nonpartisan effort supported by key good government groups such as the League of Women Voters and Common Cause, is considered the leading authority on gerrymandering in Congressional redistricting in our country. It has given the CRC proposal a grade of A. In other words, it did an excellent job of meeting fairness criteria.

I urge Democratic members of the General Assembly to look beyond partisan considerations to basic fairness principles. Let us change Maryland from one of the worst states in the country on Congressional redistricting to one of the best. Vote on good government principles rather than partisan considerations. I strongly urge you to vote for the CRC Congressional redistricting proposal.



William S. (Bill) Samuel III
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